

REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the consideration given this case to date. Applicant has now had an opportunity to carefully consider the Examiner's action, and respectfully submits that the application, as amended, is now in condition for allowance. As examined, claims 1-22 were pending. Following the amendments above, claims 1-15, 17-19, 23 and 24 are pending.

THE EXAMINER'S ACTION

In the Office Action dated August 19, 2003, the Examiner:

objected to claims 1-22 for various informalities;

rejected claims 1, 5-9, 11-12, and 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Pfaff, Jr. U.S. Patent No. 5,365,815;

rejected claims 1, 5-9, and 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Thurston U.S. Patent No. 17,408;

rejected claims 2-4, 10, 15, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pfaff or Thurston in view of a variety of other references; and

indicated claim 20 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner will appreciate that Applicant has amended many of the pending claims to include elements found by the Examiner to be patentable. As such, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) are believed to have been overcome.

While Applicant traverses the rejections made under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), specifically the assertion that each and every element of the claims, as filed, are fairly taught by the references, Applicant has amended the claims to economize resources, overcoming this rejection.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner will appreciate that Applicant has amended many of the pending claims to include elements found by the Examiner to be patentable. As such, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are believed to have been overcome.

While Applicant traverses the rejections made under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), specifically the assertion that a *prima facie* case of obviousness, including any motivation to combine is presented, Applicant has amended the claims to economize resources, overcoming this rejection.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully asserts that the case is now in a condition for allowance. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2051, referencing Attorney Docket No. 24221-88-2.

Respectfully submitted,

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